

# RENEWING A COMMUNITY SPACE (Ireland)

Abbeylands Nature Based Initiative took place from February to June 2025. At the core of the project were 11 young people aged 13-15 years old. These young people took the lead in transforming their local youth centre and community area.

The project began with the removal of dense, overgrown hedging and the uprooting of invasive roots including dogwood, bamboo, and old tree stumps. Once the space was cleared, they covered deep rooted weeds and stumps. They then laid down fresh compost and planted fresh shrubs and flowers around the entire area.

The young people also removed old broken concrete planters and contacted the local council who straightened the existing ones. The planters were then removed of overgrown plants and old soil, and the remaining ones were planted with new shrubs.

With the help of youth workers and other members of the local community the young people created a revitalized green space, which is at the centre of the community.



# GENERATIONS FOR GREEN AND CLEAN TAVUSH

## (Armenia)

On December 9th, a significant Nature-Based Initiative was successfully completed in the Tavush region of Armenia. This impactful project, led by 20-22-year-old youth from Tavush, made a tangible difference for both the local environment and its communities. The effort began with thorough area clean-ups, preparing the ground for new trees. Following this, tree planting took place, notably involving older community members from the municipality, which fostered valuable intergenerational participation. A crucial and forward-looking aspect of the initiative was the planting of trees directly in front of kindergartens, specifically aimed at instilling a love for nature in children from a very early age. We even had a memorable moment when we didn't realize it was nap time, and we accidentally woke the kids up! But despite that, they cheerfully sang for us, making the experience even more heartwarming. We still receive videos from kindergartens showing children taking care of these trees. This hands-on, multi-faceted approach has not only enhanced local ecosystems but also cultivated a deeper, lasting connection to nature within the Tavush community, contributing to a healthier and more sustainable region.



## TREE PLANTING IN KORNIDZOR (Armenia)

From November 1-5, 2024, a tree-planting event took place in the border village of Kornidzor, in Armenia's Syunik province, with the participation of around 50 people. Among them were teenagers and young adults from various vulnerable groups, many of whom faced challenges with communication and social interaction. Yet, united by a shared purpose, they became more open, spontaneous, and engaged.

Volunteers joined the initiative from cities across the country—and even from abroad. Participants ranged in age from six to eighty. The event aimed to promote mental well-being and foster intergenerational connection. It was both moving and uplifting to witness the support participants gave each other throughout the day. In total, over 1,000 trees were planted.

As they planted trees, the older generation shared stories from their lives, teaching the younger participants about the importance of living in harmony with nature and caring for the environment.

Replanting trees where others had once stood—cut down years ago—was an emotional moment for many, as it carried historical and symbolic meaning. Trees were also planted near the memorials of those lost in war, serving as symbols of life's continuity. To this day, people continue to nurture the trees, watering and tending to them, showing ongoing love and care for both their environment and one another.





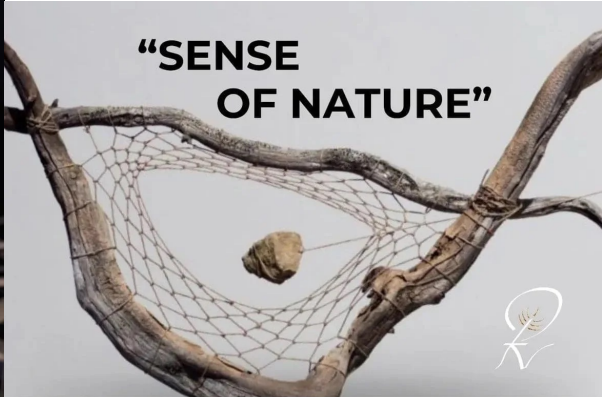
## NATURE CONNECTION WORKSHOPS (Finland)

The idea behind these Nature-Based Initiatives, called “Inside Out Nature” is that young people wanted to share their experiences and knowledge from participating in the national Pathways to Nature training with other youth from their Russian-speaking community in Joensuu, Finland. Each participant, aged 18–22, planned and organized an event for other young people to enjoy. The initiative was divided into three parts:

The first event, called “Beauty of Nature,” was a trip to a botanical garden in February, where ice sculpture and light exhibitions were held. Participants received brief instructions on how to take high-quality photos using their phones, so the images looked attractive and professional. The idea behind this event was to encourage appreciation of nature’s beauty and to capture it on camera as a lasting memory. After the event, each participant received a postcard featuring the best photo they had taken.

The second event, held on April 10, 2025, was called “Sense of Nature” and consisted of a dreamcatcher workshop. We invited a local artist from our Russian-speaking community to teach us how to create dreamcatchers using simple materials found in the forest, such as sticks, pine cones, and stones. It was a relaxing and creative evening, and everyone got to keep their completely unique dreamcatcher.

The third and final event, “Traces of Time,” took place on May 10. It was a guided tour at Kuhasalo, a nature trail in Joensuu located on a peninsula by the lake. The tour guide shared the rich history of the area and explained the concept of “Everyman’s Right”—a fundamental right in Finland that allows access to nature, including picking berries, mushrooms, wild plants, camping, and fishing, even on privately owned land. After the tour, we set up a bonfire in a hut near the lake, grilled sausages, and enjoyed the rest of the evening together. It was the perfect conclusion to the day—and to the entire initiative.



# WORKSHOP

## "DREAMCATCHER"

10.04 | 17:00  
 регистрация в описании

shama\_taiteilija

**BEAUTY & NATURE**

We invite you to a unique event at the Botania Botanical Garden, where a breathtaking exhibition of ice sculptures is taking place!

Register by [natalia.komarova@jomonifi](mailto:natalia.komarova@jomonifi)

Botania puutarha  
 17:00 - 19:00  
 Register now!



## THE ELM TREE PROJECT (Ireland)

“The Elm Tree Project” involved 4 young people aged between 14 and 17 from Clonmel in Co. Tipperary, Ireland. The 4 young people planned and prepared their Nature Based Initiative between July 2024 and April 2025.

There were also other young people aged between 11- 16 in the Youth Project and surrounding areas who participated, as well as members of the travelling community, older members from the community, and parents.

The Nature Based Initiative was carried out directly in front of the Youth Centre in Elm Park, a housing estate in Clonmel that is experiencing disadvantage.

The plan was to develop and improve a green area outside the centre by planting a number of native trees including apple trees, birch, silver birch and a centre piece of an Elm Tree as the project is in Elm Park. This proved to be a highlight of the project. Wild flower seeds were also planted near the trees which will hopefully be visible soon.

The NBI has expanded to work on another green area at the back of the centre which will be ongoing.

This NBI was a complete success in which the whole community came together and now, we all continue to care for the trees and green area. The 4 young people have a renewed and growing respect for the surrounding nature and have many new plans for the housing estate in which they live and play.



## BIODIVERSITY RESTORATION IN ALGUAZAS (Spain)

Following up the previous NBI 2- PEJUJOMA, on March 30th a group of young people from Alguazas decided to replant the area with new trees to guarantee its full recovery. They counted on the assistance of many locals and the mayor, who brought heavy machinery to help with the plantation and soil preparation effort. At the end of the day, fifty new trees had been planted and the municipality agreed to take care of them in the long run to guarantee the survival of the area as a usable green space for whole community to enjoy.







# WE TOGETHER: FINDING BELONGING THROUGH NATURE

## (Finland)

Moving to a new country often means leaving behind familiar people and places — an experience filled with both excitement and emotional challenges. As the part of the community their need for safe, supportive spaces where young immigrants can build meaningful relationships, care for their mental well-being, and feel a true sense of belonging while emerging to the beauty of nature is crucial and should be addressed.

That’s why we brought together 15 young immigrants (aged 15–30) from diverse backgrounds to experience the calm, connection, and beauty of Lapland’s northern landscapes.

Through immersive activities rooted in nature, participants had the chance to slow down, reconnect with themselves, and form strong social bonds in a nurturing environment. Whether hiking under the northern lights, dancing together, meditating, or expressing themselves through art, every moment was designed to encourage healing and meaningful experiences.

Nature acted as a powerful, universal link — bridging cultures, sparking conversation, and reminding us all of the strength found in community and self-care. “We Together” is more than a project — it’s a movement toward inclusion, connection, and creating a home wherever you are.



## NATIVE SHELTERBELT AT FOOTBALL CLUB (Ireland)

Young people from the Ballybeg community came together with a local youth football team as well as committee members from the club. Participants from the soccer club were 12 young men aged between 16 & 17. They were supported by a mix of 7 volunteers who were mixed in age between 18-24.

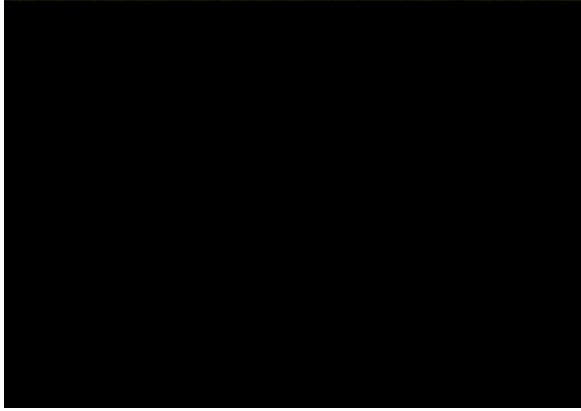
The young people who planned the initiative did so as a means of regenerating the nature within the community.

The majority of the green space in their community has given way to much needed housing, but the young people highlighted that these new housing developments are not being supplemented with appropriate nature within the environment to support the wellbeing of new members of the community.

The group planted 1100 trees in the boundary areas within the Waterford Crystal Complex. The group arrived to torrential rain that morning and without spirits being dampened, they took a shovel each and got digging.

The trees themselves were a mix of native Irish trees, silver birch, Scot's pine, oak, ash, hazel and willow. Young people sought out the expertise of tree enthusiast, Project consultant and longtime Youth Service volunteer, Tom Kent, on the day and were given an excellent demonstration on how to properly plant a tree, as well as loading the plant sites with bark mulch so that the trees would lock in the moisture from rain to give them their best possible start to life.

The day itself was a resounding success and there were more than enough cakes and snacks to keep the young people going throughout the day.





## REVITALISATION OF GREEN SPACE IN ALGUAZAS (Spain)

In Alguazas, a rural town close to Murcia, in Southern Spain, a group of 10 young people between 15 and 18 years old were concerned about a very deteriorated green space. The area of Parque La Pinada had been largely neglected, its trees cut down, and the space filled with waste for years.

The first thing the young group did, on February 28th, was an awareness campaign in 3 high schools in the town, informing more young people about the project and asking for their help.

The project also got the support of the mayor, who became actively involved.

Further in time, in March 29th, both participants and locals got together to clean La Pinada and prepare for its full recovery as a communal, biodiverse, green space. Participants did “pick and analysis”, a technique used in Spain not only to clean the area but also to help understand the characteristics of waste.

They picked and disposed of all types of waste, from old washing machines and sofas to more than 1300 cigarette butts, all while spending a day together in community, working for a common green purpose.





## TREE-PLANTING AND COMMUNITY EVENT PARPI (Armenia)

From November 23 to December 1, 2025, our Nature-Based Initiative took root in the beautiful village of Parpi in the Aragatsotn Region, as part of the *Pathways to Nature* project. Participants came together with joy and purpose, planting a diverse mix of trees and contributing to a greener, more sustainable future for the community.

Our group included participants from Yerevan and Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh region), two of whom had lost their homes due to the war. Before joining the *Pathways to Nature* journey, these participants were very closed off and understandably a bit afraid. But after meeting others and taking part in the tree planting activity, they slowly opened up. Nature, teamwork, and shared purpose helped them feel safe, welcomed, and truly part of everything we are doing. We were also joined by our friends—and their friends too—as well as some curious and kind-hearted neighbors from Parpi. They were genuinely interested in the project and happily jumped in to help. Their support and enthusiasm added even more warmth and energy to the day.

Before we began planting, we cleaned the area by removing old and damaged trees to prepare the ground—now the space looks renewed and ready to grow.

The day was more than just planting—it was about building bonds with nature and with each other. Adding an extra dose of joy, two playful dogs joined us, running around and lifting everyone's spirits with their energy and cuteness.

After the work was done, we gathered in the fresh winter air to enjoy a warm and friendly BBQ, shared music, laughter, and inspiring stories from the participants. It was a beautiful reminder that small actions—when done together—can grow into something truly meaningful.



## NEST BOXES FOR KESTRELS IN MURCIA (Spain)

The young people decided to help conserve the region's birds because it was a topic of general interest for the group, and they asked the people in charge in ARML to help.

After listening to their various proposals, they decided to help maintain a Lesser Kestrel nest box in the Guadalentín Valley (Saladares). The area needed a radical change of nest boxes due to health laws aimed at minimizing the risk of parasite infestations among the Lesser Kestrel population.

We also planted wheat in the traditional way in the surrounding area to promote food for the Kestrels and the insects and rodents that are also part of their diet.

A Lesser Kestrel nest box is a unique construction that allows a colony of Lesser Kestrels to establish itself, as a strategy to create new colonies in this type of building and prevent the extinction of the species in the short and medium term.

We then went to the mountains for the second part of our plan. We went to Sierra Espuña, a regional park that is classified as a Special Protection Area for Birds (SPA) and a Site of Community Importance (SCI), where we learned from local experts about the importance of conservation and maintaining habitats for our precious fauna in this unique part of Spain.









## RECYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGN (Finland)

As part of the Pathways to Nature Project a group of youth from Suonenjoki participated in a Nature-Based Intervention held at Metsäkartano. The Initiative focused on promoting sustainable practices by improving recycling opportunities in local schools.

The young people have already participated in the Erasmus+ youth exchange “Rhythms and Flavors – A Cultural Encounter” last May at Metsakartano, and wanted to follow up with more European work.

They organized a quiz about recycling to raise awareness among other participants. They initiated a concrete action in their own community by ordering appropriate recycling bins for both the lower secondary school and the upper secondary school in Suonenjoki.

The upper secondary school will receive bins for plastic, metal, and cardboard, while the lower secondary school will receive bins for plastic and cardboard. In addition, a deposit bottle collection bin will be purchased for the local youth centre. Once the bins are delivered, the youth will tell students about PTN -project and how to use the new recycling system.

Through this initiative, the group hopes to encourage more responsible environmental behavior in their schools and promote long-term sustainability practices.



